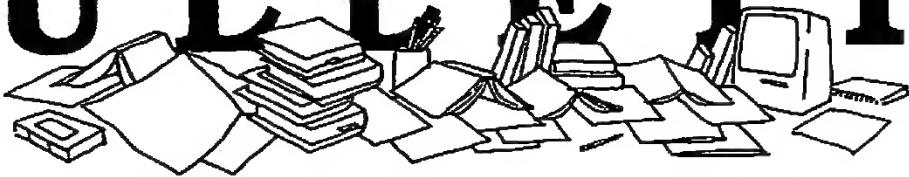


THE LITERACY MATERIALS

# BULLETIN



7

Spring 1993

**T**he reviews in the Literacy Materials Bulletin are written by members of the Literacy Materials Committee, a group of instructors from Fundamental Level adult literacy programs around British Columbia. Each member is responsible for seeking out, selecting, field testing and reviewing literacy materials for each Bulletin. Every item that is reviewed has been field tested in a number of literacy programs. The committee is funded by a cost-shared grant from the B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the National Literacy Secretariat of Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada.

This issue contains two reviews written by a very valued member of our committee, Loraine Wong. Unfortunately, Loraine feels it is time for her to leave the committee and make way for some new members. Loraine has been with the Literacy Materials Committee since its first meeting in 1989 and has contributed immeasurably to its work. We hate to see her go. However, we do have the pleasure of welcoming two new members, Iris Strong from Malaspina College and Helen Thomas from the Victoria READ Society who are already busy field testing materials for the committee and will be writing reviews for Bulletin 8.

With our last issue of the Bulletin we enclosed an evaluation card. We want to thank the many people who took the time to fill out that card and comment on the Bulletin. We were delighted to find out how much you appreciate our publication. Many of you singled out the "sample page" as a particularly helpful feature. We will continue to include these pages as well as endeavor to act on other suggestions that were made. If you haven't mailed your card back yet, we'd still like to hear from you.

This Bulletin and Bulletin 6 were printed by students attending classes in the Printing Production Department at Vancouver Community College City Centre. I hope that you enjoy this issue of the Literacy Materials Bulletin.

Laurie Gould

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**Thomas Quigley**

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<b>Title:</b>	Tales of Northern B.C.
<b>Editor:</b>	Bill Graham
<b>Publisher:</b>	Northern Literacy Readers, 1992
<b>Available:</b>	College of New Caledonia Box 5000, Burns Lake, B.C., V0J 1E0
<b>Price:</b>	free to literacy learners and providers as long as present quantities last
<b>ISBN:</b>	see below
<b>Level:</b>	Basic
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Paula Davies

## Tales of Northern B.C.

*Tales of Northern B.C.* is an attractive series of six true stories for beginning adult readers:

<i>Amelia's Daughter</i>	<u>1-895665-05-1</u>
<i>Doing My Time</i>	<u>02-7</u>
<i>Goldrushing with Father</i>	<u>03-5</u>
<i>Bluffing the Wolves</i>	<u>00-0</u>
<i>Life at Lejac</i>	<u>01-9</u>
<i>Son of the Forest</i>	<u>04-3</u>

Unanimously, the field testers rated this series highly. The large print, ample white space and illustrations facilitated reading. "I like the bigger writing. My eyes didn't get crossed trying to read it."

Although some names and other vocabulary were identified by the students as difficult, for the most part the stories were seen to be easy to read but not childish.

The topics covered in this engaging series were interesting and often led to discussion and further study. For example, when reading *Son of the Forest*, *The Story of Simon Gunanoot*, one class developed their map reading skills while tracking Simon's homes in the forest of

northern B.C. for the 13 years he evaded the police. Some students planned to go to the library and try to learn more about the evidence against Simon Gunanoot. One student was so taken with this story that she decided to write Bill Graham a letter asking if he would send her the other books in the series.

Students seemed to appreciate that the stories were true.

"Nice to read a true story."  
 "Tough People."  
 "I liked to read about the hard life they had when they came to Canada in the old days. I like history."  
 "The goldrush was really interesting."

When placed on the 'reading table' of one program – a place where people can just pick up things to read – these books were well received.

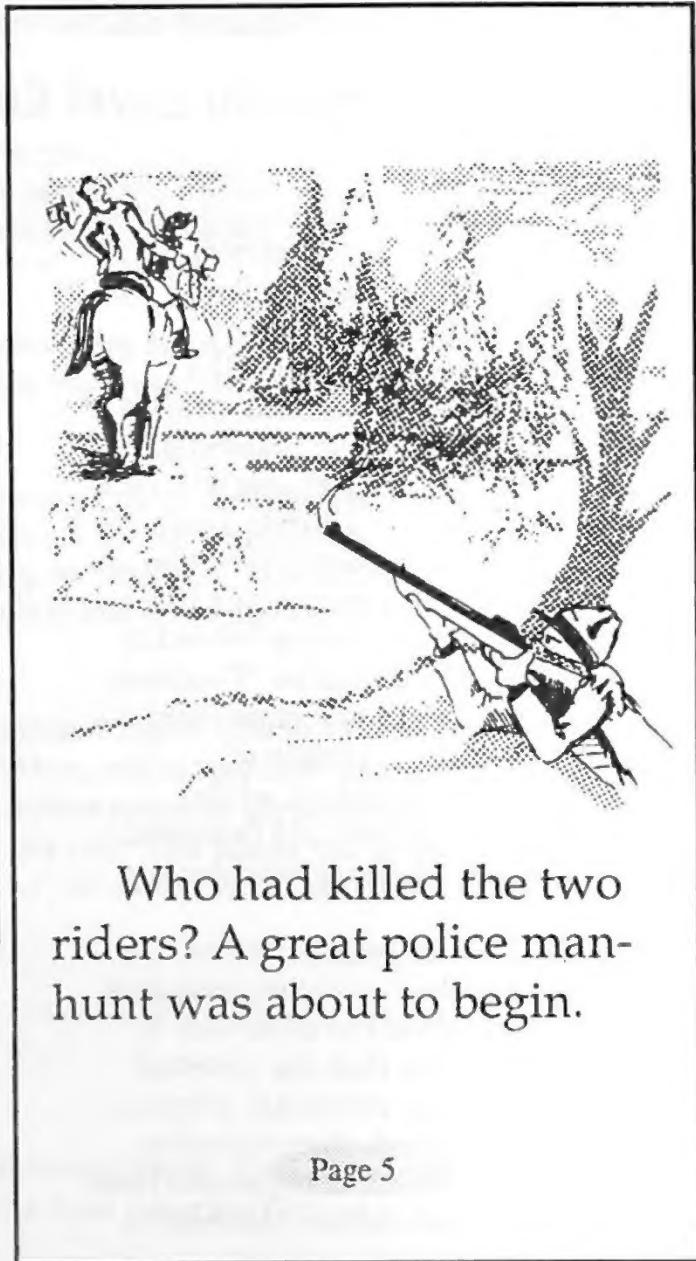
A thumb's up to this series. Let's hope there are more to follow.

A single shot rang out in the forest

A man fell from his horse and hit the ground. An hour later another shot was fired, and another man fell dead.

It was early morning on June 19, 1906, near the town of Hazelton, B.C. The forest became quiet again, but in a few hours people would find the bodies.

Page 4



Who had killed the two riders? A great police man-hunt was about to begin.

Page 5

<b>Title:</b>	Fundamental Level English Theme Units
<b>Authors:</b>	Battel, Davies, McQuaid, Nonesuch, Rodriguez, Tierney, Sawyer, Wilmot, Wilson, edited by Don Sawyer
<b>Publisher:</b>	Center for Curriculum & Professional Development, 1991
<b>Available:</b>	Provincial Curriculum and Professional Development Marketing Department, OLA, 4355 Mathissi Place, Burnaby B.C. V5G 4S8, (604) 431-3210 fax (604) 431-3333
<b>Price:</b>	\$25.40
<b>ISBN:</b>	0-7718-9166-4
<b>Level:</b>	Functional/independent
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Lorraine Wong

## Fundamental Level English Theme Units

This book is the latest in a series of guides for English curriculum and course design produced by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. Written by educators working in different situations, the collection of twelve theme units offers a wide range of subjects and materials.

The reasons for using theme units are clearly outlined in the "Introduction" which also includes a good description of the whole language approach and the philosophy and research base behind it. Following that is a section on "Teaching Strategies" which outlines numerous techniques to use in a variety of situations. Most instructors, while recognizing some of their 'old favorites', will come away with some new ideas or adaptations to try.

Each theme unit begins with an introduction for the instructor, outlining the focus and goals of the unit, and, in some cases, warning that the material may produce strong, emotional debates. Suggestions for introductory activities, materials and a wealth of classroom ideas to use or adapt then follow. Material in the units is presented in a more structured 'lesson plan' format with

step-by-step instructions for some activities. However, the emphasis is always on modifying and developing the suggested materials for individual class needs.

Response from field testers was favourable, particularly for the "Heros" unit. One instructor reported that, "We used the exercises for *Just Once* and found that in using them, we were able to deal with the book in greater depth." Field testers liked the variety of suggestions and picked and developed those that they felt were most useful. Units that were also cited were those on "Peace", "Learning", and "Immigration". One instructor suggested that the Immigration unit should include more material on women and on refugees.

While most field testers felt that the book, as a whole, was somewhat difficult for the Fundamental level, they could see how material could be adapted. Centres that offer individualized student programs would not make use of the whole class activities, but could certainly adapt some of the material and ideas for self-paced students. All of the reports suggested the book would be a valuable resource for any program.

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# What is Peace?

This section is intended to help the learners begin defining what is meant by peace, and to see how the definition of the word can change with one's point of view.

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## Strong Fences

Present the saying, "strong fences make good neighbours" to the students and ask if they have any ideas about what it means. Have them brainstorm possible answers, and record their responses on the board or overhead. Continue the discussion by introducing the concepts of delineated space and clear boundaries.

Show the NFB short film *Neighbours* (see Materials). This film depicts, without words, how conflict can develop over boundary disputes – the men were friends before the fence was erected.

After viewing the film, refer back to the saying. Have students' feelings changed since watching the film? Then remind them of John Lennon's song "Imagine" from the introductory activities. One of the lines in the song says, "Imagine there's no countries / it isn't hard to do / nothing to live or die for." Is Lennon suggesting that we might have more peace without borders or fences?

Ask the learners to do exactly what Lennon suggests: imagine what that world would be like without borders. Have students brainstorm their ideas, and record their responses. Ask the learners if they think their description of a world without countries would be shared by everyone in different parts of the world. Why or why not? This activity can be expanded into a writing exercise, where students use the brainstormed points as a basis for a full description of a world with no borders.

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## Definitions of Peace

Have students look up the word "peace" in the dictionary (note: it would be useful to have several different dictionaries for this exercise). The *Gage Canadian Dictionary*, for example, offers a number of definitions:

<b>Title:</b>	Timeless Tales
<b>Author:</b>	Tana Reiff
<b>Publisher:</b>	New Readers Press, revised 1991
<b>Available:</b>	Laubach Literacy of Canada, P.O. Box 6548, Station "A", Saint John, N.B. E2L 4R9 (506) 634-1980 In B.C. call Artel Educational Resources 1-800-665-9255
<b>Price:</b>	\$5.95/book \$11.75/tape
<b>ISBN:</b>	see below
<b>Level:</b>	Basic/functional
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Maureen Stephens

## Timeless Tales

*Timeless Tales* is a series of four books from New Readers Press titled:

- Legends 0-88336-273-2
- Myths 0-88336-272-4
- Folktales 0-88336-271-6
- Fables 0-88336-270-8

Each book has a brief introduction that explains the history and the characteristics of the subject area and is followed by eight illustrated stories. The low reading level of these books allows beginner readers to expand their exposure to different kinds of literature.

Opinions on these four books varied. One learner enjoyed the legend of Paul Bunyan because, "It was a story that was familiar to me." Other students chose to comment on a character they liked best from a book.

Steve said, "My favourite character is Zeus because he was strong and powerful."

Rob commented, "I like Echo. She seemed to be an understanding young woman."

Some students noted that the difficult names in the book about myths "... made these stories less enjoyable."

*Timeless Tales* suit a theme approach. Legends, myths, fables, and folktales have an oral tradition and they can stimulate group discussion of lessons, morals, and cultural differences. Students in one class that discussed a number of the myths said:

"The myths make you think a lot and open the mind."

"They made me think about what really is the story of the world and where people originated."

A cassette tape can be ordered with each of the *Timeless Tales*, but instructors and students did not recommend the tapes. Some students didn't like the voice and found the pace too fast while they were trying to read along. It was suggested that the tape would be best used just for listening.

*Timeless Tales* would be a positive addition to a literacy collection.

*I would like to thank the students and instructors for their comments.*



Here is how it happened. Narcissus bent down to take a drink of water from a pond. As good-looking as he was, this was the first time he had ever seen himself. "Look at that beautiful face!" he cried to the face in the pond. His cold heart melted. He tried to touch the face in the water. But when he did, the water moved and the face went away.

Time and time again, Narcissus tried to get close to the face in the water. Time and time again, it went away without a word.

"Now I know how the young women feel when I run away from them," said Narcissus.

<b>Title:</b>	Enright Computation Series
<b>Author:</b>	Brian Enright
<b>Publisher:</b>	Curriculum Associates Inc., 1985
<b>Available:</b>	Curriculum Associates Inc. 5 Esquire Rd., N. Billerica, MA 01862-2589, call toll free 1-800-225-0248 (U.S. & Canada) In B.C. call Howard Greaves 939-4564
<b>Price:</b>	Practice Books \$3.60 – \$5.85, Answer Guides \$3.80 each 2 Teacher's Resource Manuals (Fractions & Decimals/ Whole Numbers) \$50 each, DIBAS Tester Manual \$124
<b>Level:</b>	Basic/functional
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Sylvia Doherty

## Enright Computation Series

This series provides instruction and practice in whole numbers, fractions and decimals. It comprises 8 Student Practice Books, 8 Answer Guides, 2 Teacher Resource Manuals and a Diagnostic Kit.

The rationale of this series centres on identifying the point of difficulty within a student's incorrect answers. The teaching can then be directed towards correcting the precise error.

"Marking an answer incorrect will not give a student any corrective information. Pointing out the step at which a student's mistake occurs will."

Many of us automatically employ this approach. However, inexperienced instructors who are unsure of where to start with a student may find the series, or components of it, especially useful.

To assess students, the series includes a costly diagnostic assessment kit. More reasonably, they suggest two alternative methods: the review pages in the Student Practice Books, and/or simply student interviews. A table provided in the Teacher Resource Manuals corresponds skill level to the appropriate section in the Student Practice Books.

The Teacher Resource Manuals offer many varied and helpful suggestions including graphic facts, peer group problem solving, flow charts, grids, number games, and detailed instruction strategies.

The Student Practice Books are clearly laid out and progress logically from one skill to the next. The skill being taught is identified at the bottom of each page. Step-by-step explanations of the process at the top of the practice pages guide the student through each new type of question, and the "Think and Do" reminders help students focus. Answers are not included in the books although the Teacher Resource Manuals have an answer key. The flow charts at the back of each book need some instructor guidance and orientation to decipher, but they are clear, step-by-step analyses of the processes.

Instructors should maintain close supervision and clarification throughout since there are some gaps and confusing sections. No time is spent introducing the concept of a fraction or regrouping (borrowing) in the subtraction of fractions. Cancelling is not taught when multiplying fractions, making students work with unnecessarily large numbers when reducing their answers. The LCD table and the instructions for converting fractions to LCD are awkward and confusing.

I would recommend this series, not as a major classroom set, but as good supplementary material, offering an abundance of exercises for reinforcement or drill and a wealth of helpful information for the instructor.

Note: If you need help to find the LCD, see flow chart VI on page 118.

**Sample Page**

$9\frac{2}{5}$	$9\frac{2}{5} = 9\frac{16}{40}$	$9\frac{2}{5} = 9\frac{16}{40}$	$9\frac{2}{5} = 8\frac{56}{40}$	$9\frac{2}{5} = 8\frac{56}{40}$	$9\frac{2}{5} = 8\frac{56}{40}$
$- 3\frac{7}{8}$	$- 3\frac{7}{8} = 3\frac{35}{40}$				
			$\frac{21}{40}$	$5\frac{21}{40}$	$5\frac{21}{40}$

Think:  
Denominators  
are not equal.  
Do: Rewrite  
fractions with  
the LCD.

Think: Bottom  
fraction > top  
fraction.  
Do: Regroup top  
fraction.

Subtract  
numerators.

Subtract whole  
numbers.

Think: Answer  
is in simplest  
terms.

a.

$9\frac{2}{5} = 9\frac{16}{40}$	$3\frac{3}{8}$	$11\frac{5}{6}$	$7\frac{5}{9}$
$- 3\frac{7}{8} = 3\frac{35}{40}$	$- 2\frac{3}{5}$	$- 7\frac{6}{7}$	$- 3\frac{3}{4}$
	$5\frac{21}{40}$		

b.

$5\frac{5}{6}$	$4\frac{4}{9}$	$50\frac{2}{5}$	$12\frac{1}{2}$
$- 1\frac{10}{11}$	$- 2\frac{3}{4}$	$- 9\frac{7}{8}$	$- 9\frac{6}{7}$

c.

$9\frac{8}{9}$	$42\frac{4}{9}$	$6\frac{1}{3}$	$7\frac{2}{9}$
$- 4\frac{9}{10}$	$- 20\frac{6}{7}$	$- 3\frac{7}{8}$	$- 5\frac{7}{8}$

d.

$8\frac{1}{10}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$	$5\frac{2}{3}$	$8\frac{2}{6}$
$- 4\frac{5}{7}$	$- 1\frac{8}{9}$	$- 2\frac{3}{4}$	$- 4\frac{4}{5}$

**SUBTRACTION OF FRACTIONS:**  
Mixed Number from a Mixed Number,  
with Regrouping

<b>Title:</b>	Paperwork
<b>Editor:</b>	Tom Wayman
<b>Publisher:</b>	Harbor Publishing, Fall 1991
<b>Available:</b>	Harbor Publishing, P.O. Box 219, Madeira Park, B.C. V0N 2H0, (604) 833-2730 fax (604) 883-9451
<b>Price:</b>	\$14.95
<b>ISBN:</b>	1-55017-042-2
<b>Level:</b>	Functional/independent (all levels if read aloud)
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Paula Davies

## Paperwork

*Paperwork* is a collection of poems, edited by Tom Wayman, that is full of informative and accessible glimpses into the lives of working men and women. The print is a bit small and reading level high, but the poems seemed to have generated rich discussion when read aloud and examined in a group.

These discussions were enhanced by the fact that often, students had experience in the job being described in a poem. "I could relate to it (Klik). We used to play jokes like that on the job." The personal tone of many of the poems also encouraged comments and discussion.

The simple and familiar language of much of the poetry made the complex ideas contained in the poems accessible. One instructor noted how well the collection showed students the thinking that goes on when making inferences because the poems were open to different interpretations.

Many of the poems are by B.C. artists making the subject and setting of this work of literature relevant to our students.

Aside from the high reading level required for independent reading of the anthology, some concern was expressed over the number of swear words contained in some of the poetry. It was also noted that the collection seemed more popular with older students than with late teens and early twenty year olds.



Some nights  
I come home at two or three a.m.  
crawl in beside him  
he makes room for me and cuddles me  
without waking up

Some nights  
I get called in again at four  
he never knows I was there

■ TRYING TO TURN A BAD THING INTO GOOD

SUE DORO

3:20 p.m.

a worse kind of sad  
is the second-shift mom  
leaving for work  
in the afternoon  
through no choice  
of her own

just in time  
to wave at her kids  
getting off the school bus  
coming home

3:25 p.m.

the man in the life  
of the second-shift woman  
washes cast iron  
from his face and hands  
changes clothes  
and starts on his way  
home from work  
knowing she's already gone

back and forth they travel  
using every minute  
of the earth's rotation  
her eyes are open

his are shut  
she's running a machine  
he's figuring out  
another kid emergency  
before he goes to bed  
making decisions  
in his one head  
that could easily use two

they write each other notes  
tape record messages  
and try not to argue  
on the telephone  
because it's hell to cry alone

8:00 p.m.

monday through friday  
she phones every night  
on her 8 o'clock break  
from the telephone  
in the warehouse  
that's the most quiet

then for ten minutes  
she listens to her children  
grow

says goodbye  
hangs up

cries more  
'til she cries less  
and loves  
like a lifetime  
full of weekends

3:00 a.m.

second-shift lady  
upside-down life  
comes home to quiet

<b>Book Title:</b>	Literacy and Health Project Report Phase One — Making the World Healthier And Safer For People Who Can't Read
<b>Publisher:</b>	Ontario Public Health Assoc. & Frontier College, 1989
<b>Available:</b>	Literacy and Health Project, Ontario Public Health Assoc. 468 Queen St. East, Ste. 202, Toronto, Ontario M5A 1T7 (416) 367-3313
<b>Price:</b>	Project Report — free (Research Report available for \$7.50)
<b>ISBN</b>	0-8224-4637-5
<b>Level:</b>	Independent (plain language summary at functional level)
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Cathy Rayment

## Literacy And Health Project: Making the World Healthier and Safer For People Who Can't Read

*Our guest reviewer, Cathy Rayment, is a librarian with the Vancouver Health Department and a participant in the Literacy and Health Project initiated by Vancouver Library Services and the Vancouver Health Department.*

Lives are not only impoverished by low literacy, they are also endangered. A number of medical economists have begun to realize that spending additional money on education can reduce mortality more than by spending additional money on medical care. This report explores that premise and documents quite clearly the direct and indirect impacts of illiteracy on health. More importantly, the research and consultation that were done to produce this report resulted from collaboration between literacy and health professionals. This sort of cooperative effort will undoubtedly serve as a model for future actions on this topic.

Although much of the report deals with health effects, it also puts forward numerous potential strategies for dealing with the problems, and makes several recommendations, and suggestions for

concerted action. The report stresses the need for coordinated, cooperative effort on the part of the public, private organizations, and the various levels of government.

The report is intended for health and literacy professionals, and for government bureaucrats, but the plain English summary report puts the findings within the grasp of readers with only functional reading levels. The main body of the report is clearly presented, with major points outlined on each page margin, and with numerous illustrations. This report is fascinating to read. It must surely have been written by literacy experts: everyone knows that health professionals don't write in plain English! If enough of them read this report though, that can be expected to change.

It should be noted that the statistics used in the report are from the *Southam Literacy Survey* of 1987. More recent studies indicate that the number of Canadians having reading problems may be even higher than reported in that study.



Guest Review



examined some 20 other factors and concluded that: "Years of schooling persists as a predictor of good health regardless of which other variables enter the equation or in what manner health is measured."<sup>4</sup>

Particularly dramatic is a report of the World Bank on the effects of education on health.<sup>5</sup> *The report indicates that literacy is the most important variable associated with mortality, even more so than income and food intake!*

## HOW IS ILLITERACY RELATED TO POORER HEALTH?

Does illiteracy lead to poorer health? It is clear that there is no simple answer to this question. The nature of the impact is complex. It appears that illiteracy has an indirect affect on health as well as a more pronounced direct affect. Some of these factors are discussed below.

## DIRECT IMPACT OF ILLITERACY ON HEALTH

In the literature we surveyed, there is limited information indicating the direct impact of illiteracy on health. On the other hand, the responses of community health and literacy workers to our questionnaire, as well as the case studies we conducted, enabled us to identify numerous examples of health problems, often severe enough to require hospitalization, directly related to illiteracy. The following are specific examples of the types of problems reported.

### *Incorrect Use of Medications:*

**lack of understanding  
inability to read**

Just about half the respondents to our questionnaire indicated an experience with incorrect use of medications, or a lack of understanding instructions about proper use of medications. This involved both prescription drugs as well as over-the-counter (OTC) medications. Errors due to an inability to read instructions have resulted in overdoses and in mixing up different medications. Some of these errors were serious:

*Inappropriate administration of medication -- both OTC and prescription. Clients go by colours and are confused if brand changes and pills change colour. Can't read directions, so underdose or overdose with adverse effects.*

*Geriatric patient admitted to hospital with overdose of sleeping medication -- couldn't read English or mother tongue and couldn't differentiate medications or remember when to take them -- an accidental overdose.*

<b>Title:</b>	WorkTales
<b>Author:</b>	Tana Reiff
<b>Publisher:</b>	Fearon/Janus, 1992
<b>Available:</b>	Prentice-Hall Canada, Inc., 1870 Birchmount Rd. Scarborough, Ont. M1P 2J7, 1-800-567-3800 fax 299-2529
<b>Price:</b>	Complete series \$66.70 or \$7.15 each title Curriculum Guide \$29.68
<b>ISBN:</b>	0-8224-7161-2 (set)
<b>Level:</b>	Basic/functional
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Laurie Gould

## WorkTales

*WorkTales* is a new collection of ten true-to-life stories set in the workplace. The characters in these stories are faced with issues that are relevant and familiar to adult learners: job stress, sexism, safety, mechanization, assertiveness, substance abuse and coping with layoff. The stories explore how certain factors such as the ability to get along with others, flexibility, and education influence workplace success.

The books are pocketbook size and about 60 pages in length. Print is a good size for beginning readers and each line of reading consists of only a short phrase. Each book contains approximately thirteen chapters with follow-up questions at the end of each chapter. The questions ask the reader to think critically about personal and on-the-job issues. My students wrote their answers to these questions in a reading response journal each day, and I then wrote a short comment referring to their response or the issue. The journals often became a place where we discussed and explored these issues further. These questions were particularly useful for students who had difficulty expressing opinions.

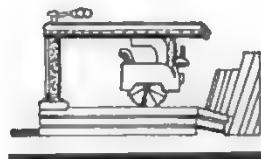
A curriculum guide for the series is available which includes teaching strategies, a plot summary of each book,

background on workplace personnel problems and vocabulary lists. The guide also contains reproducible book report forms, activity sheets, comprehension questions and language-building activities for each book. These materials made it possible to individualize the activities so that students could choose a book that interested them and work at their own rate.

Student responses to *WorkTales* were enthusiastic:

- “easy to understand”
- “a good story”
- “learned what goes on in an office”
- “makes you want to keep reading”
- “very realistic”
- “could relate to it”
- “liked the ending”
- “sounds very real”
- “questions made you think a bit”
- “deals with everyday life when one big tragedy happens”

My students read *WorkTales* as part of a theme unit on Work along with poems from *Paperwork* which is also reviewed in this Bulletin. The *Worktales* books contributed a great deal to the success of this theme unit by encouraging critical reading, thinking and discussion about issues that touch all our lives.



## CHAPTER 2

It was Lindy's first day working in the wood shop. She met the boss, Chet Michaels. Chet showed her to the saw table where she would work.

Lindy's job was to cut boards into the right shapes. Each board would become the side or front of a chair or sofa.

Lindy did her job standing at the saw table. The round blade of the saw was spinning



The Saw that Talked

all the time. With one hand, Lindy held the board against the back of the table. With the other hand, she pulled the saw handle toward her. The spinning blade cut each board along the marks.

She had worked with round blades before. But something was missing from this one. There was no guard on the blade. At vo-tech school, every saw blade had a plastic guard over it. She didn't have to worry if her hand slipped. The guard made sure

<b>Title:</b>	Heinemann Guided Readers
<b>Author:</b>	Many
<b>Publisher:</b>	Heinemann
<b>Available:</b>	Monarch Books, 5000 Dufferin Street, Unit K, Downsview, Ontario M3H 5T5 (416) 663-8231 fax 736-1702 In B.C. call Howard Greaves (604) 939-4564
<b>Price:</b>	Ranges from \$4.50 to \$6.50 per book
<b>Level:</b>	Basic to independent
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Lorraine Wong

## Heinemann Guided Readers

*Heinemann Guided Readers* is a "series of original and simplified stories published at five levels to provide a choice of enjoyable reading material for all learners of English." The five levels are colour coded on the front and back cover and spine, so readers can easily recognize an appropriate book: Purple=Starter, Orange=Beginners, Green=Elementary, Pink=Intermediate, Blue=Upper Level.

The series has recently been redone and boasts new, colourful covers and illustrations, as well as a larger format and better quality paper. All books at the Beginner level now have colour illustrations and are really very attractive. Intermediate and Upper level books have glossaries and questions at the end, and there are separate worksheets available. One instructor liked the fact that there is no related teacher resource material in the same book, so "it reads like a novel." Some titles are now available in cassette, but these were not field tested.

There are only 9 titles in the Starter level (as opposed to 35 in Intermediate) and some may seem a bit young for adult readers. The Beginner level has a choice of 18 titles with a range of topics from science fiction to travel or human interest. Books

at this level are about 600 words and although the sentences are short and simple, there is enough variety to hold the interest of adult readers. Student responses:

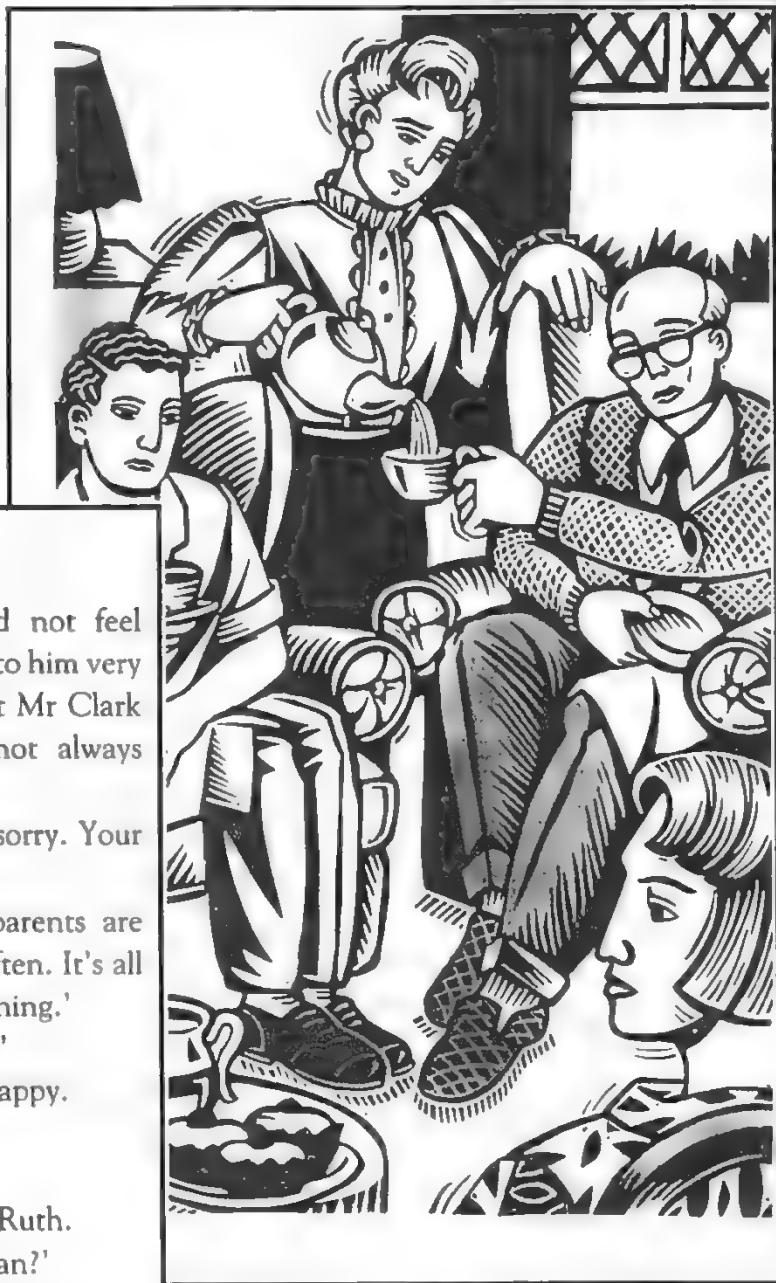
"I like the story because it had lots of pictures and the story was explained well. It was easy to read."

"The pictures helped, but I can understand the words."

The Intermediate level (1600 basic words) has a wider selection of titles, including some classics. Comments on *Meet Me In Istanbul* included: "Kept me in suspense. Good to have the glossary, but I didn't need the pictures. Easy to read, but not boring."

Comments on *Return of the Native* from the Upper level (2200 basic words) were varied: "Names of people were hard to pronounce. Maybe too easy for upper level students." Once names and places were sorted out, the student "could not put it down."

Ask for a brochure on the series and you'll receive a very detailed outline of the levels, titles, grammar and grading system. There's bound to be something to catch the interest of any class.



'Yes,' said Mr Clark. 'We know that!'

Jan stayed for about an hour. He did not feel comfortable. Mr and Mrs Clark did not speak to him very much. Sometimes they said a few words. But Mr Clark spoke English very quickly and Jan did not always understand him.

Outside the door, Jan said to Ruth, 'I'm sorry. Your parents don't like me very much.'

'Don't be silly, Jan,' said Ruth. 'My parents are difficult. They don't meet new people very often. It's all right. Don't worry, I'll see you tomorrow evening.'

'OK, Ruth,' said Jan. 'See you tomorrow.'

And he walked away. But he still felt unhappy.

Later that evening, Mrs Clark was talking to Ruth.

'Well, Mum,' asked Ruth. 'Did you like Jan?'

'I'm sorry,' Ruth's mother said. 'Your father and I found him a difficult person.'

'Why?'

'Well, he didn't speak English very well,' said Mrs Clark.

'But Mum,' said Ruth, 'he isn't English. He's Polish!'

'I know,' said Mrs Clark. 'And perhaps he's a nice boy. But your father and I liked Bill. What happened to Bill? What's wrong with an English boyfriend? Bill was a nice boy. And Jan is going back to Poland soon. What will you do then?'

<b>Title:</b>	Help Yourself: How to Take Advantage of Your Learning Styles
<b>Author:</b>	Gail Murphy Sonbuchner
<b>Publisher:</b>	New Readers Press, 1991
<b>Available:</b>	Laubach Literacy of Canada, P.O. Box 6548, Station "A" St. John, N.B. E2L 4R9, (506)634-1980 fax (506)634-0944 In B.C. call Artel Educational Resources 1-800-665-9255
<b>Price:</b>	\$13.50
<b>Level:</b>	Independent
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Lorraine Fox

## **Help Yourself**

### **How to Take Advantage of Your Learning Styles**

This book is designed to assist learners in discovering their personal strengths, and introduces strategies to take advantage of their own learning styles. At the beginning of the book a list of eight steps carefully explains how to use the book. Learners are told that if they follow these steps they will discover a number of ways to take advantage of their learning styles and learn how to conquer specific problems so they will learn more effectively.

Chapter one begins by telling the learner that "Learning style means the variety of ways learners take in, store, and retrieve information. To help yourself you must be able to recognize your particular style." A learning style inventory is provided to help students identify their dominant learning modes. It covers the six basic learning styles: reading, writing, listening, speaking, visualizing, and manipulating.

Chapter two involves further self-analysis as students are helped to determine their best study environment. Succeeding chapters show learners how to use their personal learning style to improve their skills in: "Organization and Time Management", "Memory",

"Listening", "Pronunciation and Accuracy in Reading", "Reading Comprehension", "Writing" "Mathematics" and "Test Taking." At the back of the book there is a series of word lists to help with short vowels, long vowels, other vowels, silent consonants, prefixes, roots and suffixes. Instructor assistance may be required for some exercises, but for the most part, the learner is able to work independently.

Instructors who field tested this book found it to be adult oriented and interesting to learners. They said the book encouraged critical thinking and discussion. One instructor who used the chapters on, "Finding Your Learning Style", "Reading Comprehension" and "Test Taking" said,

"I found this book to be very helpful in assisting my students with a variety of tasks. . . . Students liked the plain language and organization of the book."

*Help Yourself* is a handy reference for students who want to maximize their learning styles, as well as for teachers and tutors who want to better understand learning styles and their practical application. It would be a very useful addition to any classroom.

# B.

## *How can I stop confusing oral directions?*



1. Concentrate on the directions. Stop any work you are doing. Tell yourself you are going to remember the directions.

"I am going to remember how to get to Carla's house."



2. Visualize what you are being told.

Mentally drive the route to Carla's house as you hear the directions.



3. Look at the person who is speaking. The speaker's facial expressions and gestures will help you understand and remember the directions.

- Is he pointing?
- Is he demonstrating something?
- Is he showing you where to put something?



4. Ask questions. Ask them as soon as possible whenever you don't understand something.

Don't give yourself a chance to confuse directions.



5. Repeat the directions to yourself. It helps to put the directions in your own words.

If you have to repeat them, you will pay closer attention to what is said.



6. Write down words and phrases. These things are always important to remember when following directions:

This is called "pencil listening!"

- Dates
- Places
- Times
- What to bring

July 29

Room 301, Holiday Inn

8:30 AM sharp!

Pencil, paper

<b>Titles:</b>	When I Was A Little Girl Living In Nova Scotia She's Speaking Out
<b>Authors:</b>	Janet Ryan / Eugenie Jablonski
<b>Publisher:</b>	Parkdale People's Press, 1990
<b>Available:</b>	Parkdale Project Read, 1303 Queen Street West, Toronto, Ontario M6K 1L6 (416) 531-6308
<b>Price:</b>	\$5.00 each (discount for multiple copies)
<b>Level:</b>	Basic /functional
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Yana Sabanskis and Lorraine Fox

## When I Was a Little Girl Living in Nova Scotia

*When I was A Little Girl In Nova Scotia* is a poignant documentary told simply and sincerely with accompanying pictures and a poem. This is definitely a woman's book, and more specifically for women who like reading about the lives of others. Beginning readers enjoyed the book, first of all for its storyline, and secondly because the level was well within their capacity. They enjoyed being able to read a book straight through. One comment was that, "I didn't have to miss words or stop the story to ask about a word." There was a mixed response to how the women related to the book. One reader, originally from Newfoundland enjoyed the book because it triggered memories of the past and appealed to her sense of 'home'. Other readers enjoyed the book but did not relate to the writer as another adult learner. But this is quite common for beginning readers.

Although the book was well-received, there was some disappointment in the physical presentation. The cover is not straight and the printing is crooked. As well, at times, the storyline does not match the accompanying picture. However, this did not detract from the enjoyment of the book.

## She's Speaking Out

*She's Speaking Out* is a small book that tells the experiences of Janet Ryan in her struggle to become an accomplished reader and successful person.

Janet has had trouble with reading since she began grade one and her problems continue to plague her in her adult life. Jane feels even more hopeless when her father and brother die, as these family members have always been her support.

Janet leaves home to make a life of her own, although this is a scary move for her. When Janet finds a new apartment, she also notices a phone number for a literacy program. Janet enrolls with a tutor in the program and feels this is a new beginning for her.

This book would be enjoyed by most literacy learners; it is a story that closely mirrors their own. The book is a reaffirmation to new readers and uses language which is not difficult to master.

*These two selections were written by learners at Parkdale Project Read, a non-profit community-based literacy organization in Toronto.*

**When I Was A Little Girl Living In Nova Scotia**

All the family  
lived in the house my dad built.  
There was a lot of land.  
There were some chickens, pigs, sheep,  
cows, and an ox team.

When my brothers would cut the hay,  
the small children always used to go  
in the wagon to jump on the hay.  
That way, the brothers could always  
put more hay on the wagon.  
And my sisters and I really  
enjoyed jumping on the hay.

**She's Speaking Out**

Let me tell you  
what it is like  
to be illiterate.

Come and read my book  
and you will know.



<b>Title:</b>	Women, Literacy and Action: A Handbook
<b>Editor:</b>	Mary Breen, Project Co-ordinator
<b>Publisher:</b>	Ontario Literacy Coalition, 1991
<b>Available:</b>	Ontario Literacy Coalition, (416) 963-5787
	#1003 365 Bloor Street East, Toronto, Ontario M42 3L4
<b>Price:</b>	\$10.00
<b>Reviewer:</b>	Laurie Gould

## Women, Literacy and Action: A Handbook

*Women, Literacy and Action: A Handbook* was written by a group of feminist literacy workers. It includes articles on: "Feminism and Literacy", "Looking at "Ism's": Visible Minority Women and Literacy", "Parenting and Literacy", "Native Women in Literacy", "Women and Health and Literacy", "Women, Literacy and Poverty: Making the Connections", as well as sections on "International Women's Day Activities for Literacy Programs", and "Resources".

The writers tackle a number of controversial topics, for example, "woman positive" vs. "learner centered" programming. They assert that learners tend to choose topics and materials that are familiar and contend that these are often traditional and mainstream, so learners don't have the opportunity to examine alternative ideas or points of view. Other topics discussed in the book include: literacy and First Nations people, racism, women-only groups or classes, issues that woman learners raise when they begin to speak out such as poverty, rape, abuse, and barriers which limit their access to programs including street violence, harassment, transportation, childcare, scheduling. "Women and Health and Literacy" in a clear and concise way shows the impact of literacy on health.

Literacy instructors who reviewed this book generally had positive things to say. "I thought it was excellent."

"The value for us was in the making of connections between literacy work and other issues that concern us such as poverty, health, violence, racism and aboriginal concerns."

No other book has caused as lively and heated a discussion at a Literacy Materials Committee meeting. One member felt the feminist slant distorted some of the issues raised. "It isn't just women workers who are overworked and underpaid. . . I am irritated by the way the writers seem to throw in references to men as an afterthought." Another felt the book did too much 'male-bashing' and dredged up old issues that literacy workers have already thought about and acted on. Other committee members felt the issues raised in this book were still unresolved and pertinent to literacy workers, and only through constant examination and discussion would we ever come to terms with them.

In the introduction of *Women, Literacy and Action* it is stated that its goal is to "spark discussion". It certainly did in our committee and for that reason we agreed it was important to review this handbook.

# The Bulletin's Board

## Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Foundation:

The Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Foundation was founded by the book and periodical industry in Canada. It is supported by readers, writers, editors, publishers, booksellers, librarians, book distributors and book manufacturers. The Foundation provides grants to community-based literacy groups in Canada. The funds are used for the production of learning materials for adult learners and/or tutors. Canada Post provided a grant for the production of a catalogue that describes all projects previously funded by the Foundation. The catalogue includes ordering information for materials produced through these grants. To obtain a free copy of this catalogue or a grant application send a self-addressed 8.5 by 11 inch envelope to:

Canadian Give the Gift of Literacy Foundation  
35 Spadina Road  
Toronto, Ontario M5R 2S9

## Circulating Materials:

The materials reviewed in this Bulletin are available on a loan basis for a period of a month. If you wish to borrow any of them, please contact:

Literacy B.C.  
Suite 1128, 510 West Hastings Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1L8  
Tel: (604) 687-5077 Fax (604) 687-5076

## Permanent Collection:

A complete and permanent set of materials from all six *Literacy Materials Bulletins* is available for viewing at:

Adult Literacy Contact Centre  
Suite 622, 510 West Hastings Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1L8  
Tel: 684-0624 (Lower Mainland) 1-800-663-1293

## Mailing List:

If you would like to be added to the *Literacy Materials Bulletin* mailing list or want to order back copies of the Bulletin, please contact the Adult Literacy Contact Centre.

## Reader Recommendations:

The Literacy Materials Committee wants to hear about your favorite literacy materials - books, pamphlets, videos, movies, tapes, software, posters, flashcards, games, etc.. Please fill out the form on the back of this page and mail to the address indicated.

## RECOMMENDED LITERACY MATERIALS REVIEW FORM

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher \_\_\_\_\_ Copyright Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Level (please circle)**

\* Basic (0-3)

\*\* Functional (4-6)

\*\*\* Independent (7-9)

*Please comment briefly on each of these. Feel free to include more information on an additional sheet.*

1. Adult oriented? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Interesting to learners? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Appropriate to the reading level of learners? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Successful with learners? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Encourages meaningful discussion and critical thinking? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Easy to use? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Free of bias for age, sex, and race? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Up-to-date? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Canadian content? \_\_\_\_\_

*Send the completed form to:*

**Laurie Gould  
Basic Education Department  
Vancouver Community College (KEC)  
1155 East Broadway  
Vancouver, B.C. V5T 1Y8**

Recommended by:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(name)

(address)